Press release | 27.10.2015

EU e-comms rules

Net neutrality threatened under hollow promise of roaming charge end

The European Parliament today voted to adopt a legislative agreement on EU electronic communications rules. Commenting after the vote, Green internet and telecoms spokesperson **Michel Reimon** said:

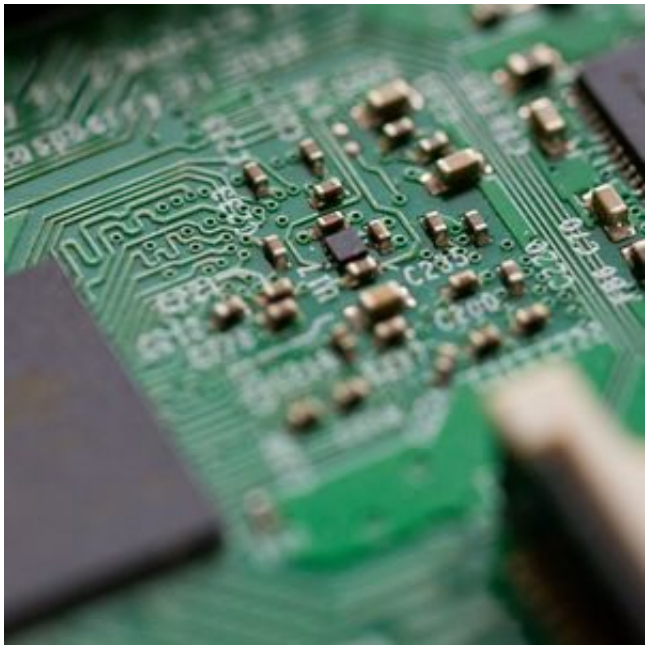
"The new e-communications rules adopted today are being sold as a victory for consumers but this is a sham. Despite rhetoric to the contrary, this package poses a real threat to the principle of net neutrality. The European Parliament had originally pushed for this to be enshrined in the legislation but the final agreement fails in this regard. Instead it introduces the possibility of 'traffic management' by service providers and 'specialised services', which would de facto undermine net neutrality and lead to a two-tier internet, with those who pay more getting more privileged access.

"To add insult to injury, the package is being sold as an end to roaming charges for mobile phone users but this is a hollow promise. While upfront roaming fees will end earlier than foreseen, the provisions are littered with loopholes under which telecoms firms could continue to charge more for the use of mobile phones when users travel in different EU member states. Service providers will be able to compensate for the loss with other charges if they claim they need to shore up their domestic prices. It will be up to national authorities to verify these claims, risking the creation of a patchwork of national exemptions. It is far from certain that it will be any cheaper to use phones cross border in 2017."

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Michel Reimon

Member

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